



News Release

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More Kids on CHIP Than Ever Before

Still Room for 8,000 More Children

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Enrollment numbers for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) are at an all time high, but there’s still room to insure about 8,000 more children. As part of CHIP’s efforts to reach these children, CHIP will be taking applications at a health fair this Saturday, October 22, at the Northwest Multipurpose Center, 1300 West 300 North, Salt Lake City, from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

CHIP eligibility workers will team up with the Center for Multicultural Health to talk one on one with parents at the health fair. “The health fair will focus on the seven greatest health disparities in minorities and access to health insurance for children,” explains Owen Quiñonez, Director, Center for Multicultural Health, Utah Department of Health (UDOH). “We will be there to talk more in depth about these concerns.”

Involvement at the health fair is just one of the ways CHIP is helping to ensure more children get health coverage. “We’re insuring more kids than we have in the past,” says Gayleen Henderson, CHIP program manager, UDOH. “But there’s still room for plenty more.” Henderson says CHIP enrollment is following expectations of steady growth since the program opened for extended enrollment in July. Since that time, CHIP has signed up an additional 8,672 children for a total of 31,444 Utah kids currently on the program.

The extended open enrollment is a new way of doing business for CHIP. Since 2002, funding constraints have limited enrollment to short periods, often only two weeks long. This year, however, the Utah legislature provided additional funds to open CHIP for a longer, more sustainable period. The new funding allows an average of 40,000 Utah children to be insured through CHIP, putting a dent in the nearly 67,000 uninsured children ages 0-18.

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CHIP covers well-child exams, immunizations, doctor visits, hospital and emergency care, prescriptions, hearing and eye exams, mental health services, and dental care for children under the age of 19. Qualification for CHIP depends on family size and income. The following chart is an example of income guidelines:

Family Size	Maximum Income Per Year
4	\$38,700
5	\$45,220
6	\$51,740
7	\$58,260

When reviewing CHIP's income guidelines, Kari Scribner, whose children are insured through CHIP, says she and her husband were surprised that they qualified based on income guidelines. "I think it's important to let people know where the cut off levels are," Scribner said. "They're higher than you think."

Children of working parents, self-employed parents, and children with pre-existing medical conditions are all examples of applicants who may qualify. The program also requires that children be a U.S. citizen or legal resident, and not covered by any other health insurance.

While UDOH employees at the health fair will be there to offer help in English or Spanish, Utahns may also call the CHIP hotline 1-877-KIDS-NOW (1-877-543-7669) and ask for interpreters in additional languages such as Tongan, Somalian, Afrikaans, Navajo and Cantonese to name a few. Applications can be filled out online as well at www.health.utah.gov/chip or obtained by visiting a local eligibility office.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.